

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY



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July 2, 1971

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Dear [REDACTED]

A research project I have undertaken this summer is described in the enclosed brief statement. It may be of some interest to you and I am sure your advice on it would be helpful, insofar as you are able to comment on it.

I would welcome a chance to discuss this with you. I plan to be in Washington briefly in the latter part of July and also in August. Is there a chance you could be my guest for lunch some day and for a general discussion of my project?

I would appreciate any comments you may have on my project and suggestions of others with whom I might talk. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Harry Howe Ransom
(erm)

Harry Howe Ransom
Chairman

HHR:erm

enclosure

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THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM-- SURVEY OF FRONTIERS FOR RESEARCH

June, 1971

With support from Russell Sage Foundation of New York I am undertaking a survey this summer of the "research frontiers" of questions relating to the intelligence systems and activities of the United States government.

My objectives are to draft a concise catalogue of questions on this topic needing scholarly investigation and to make a preliminary assessment and analysis of the research feasibility with regard to such topics.

In a recent book, The Intelligence Establishment (Harvard Press, 1970) I describe the vast intelligence bureaucracies that have evolved since 1947 and I identify some problems of purpose, policy, organization and control. A great amount of scholarly work remains to be done in this relatively unexplored frontier for social science research. Because of government security "classifications" the question of research feasibility is a serious one.

I am now making a survey of this research frontier. My objectives are (1) to develop an inventory of feasible topics for research, (2) to compile a list of individuals currently interested in this field of research (3) to outline a research agenda. I intend to prepare for publication a brief report on my survey.

Some of the topical questions to be explored are:

1. Is the concept of intelligence "community" a myth?
2. What is the effectiveness of policy controls within the system? (Executive, Legislative and Judicial)
3. What statutory and administrative authority exists for current assignments of intelligence roles and missions?

4. What is the interface of domestic counter-intelligence and positive (strategic) overseas intelligence functions?
5. What has been the impact of technology on basic intelligence functions?
6. What can be known about systems for data collection, categorization, storage, retrieval and about the compatibility among various information processing units within the system?
7. To what extent is sophisticated social science methodology now used in intelligence analysis and reporting?
8. What can be known about programs for recruiting, training and personnel development within the intelligence agencies?
9. Can criteria for efficiency and effectiveness of the system be developed?

Other topics are likely to be added to this list, which will be refined in the process of the survey.

With reference to these topics, I wish to inventory: (a) individuals knowledgeable or interested in further exploration of some of these topics (b) relevant published work, including unclassified public documents (c) research already in progress related to these topics.

Suggestions and comments would be most appreciated.

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